

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A flame-retardant seamless belt comprised ~~composed~~ of a thermoplastic composition containing a polyester thermoplastic elastomer as a main component thereof; at not less than 15 wt% ~~nor~~ and not more than 40 wt% of melamine cyanurate, serving as a flame-retardant additive, for a whole based on the total weight of said thermoplastic composition; and not less than 0.01 parts by weight ~~nor~~ and not more than three parts by weight of an anion-containing salt, shown by a chemical formula + (1) shown below, for per 100 parts by weight of an entire polymer component,

wherein said thermoplastic composition has a volume resistivity of not less than $1.0 \times 10^6 \Omega \cdot \text{cm}$ ~~nor~~ and not more than $1.0 \times 10^{12} \Omega \cdot \text{cm}$ [.] :

Chemical Formula 1

where X_1 and X_2 each denote a functional group [[,]] containing C, -F, and $-\text{SO}_2-$, whose number of carbon atoms is one to eight.

2. (Currently Amended) The flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 1, wherein said X_1^- of said chemical formula $(1)^+$ is $C_{n1}H_{m1}F_{(2n1-m1+1)}-SO_2^-$, and said X_2^- of said chemical formula $(1)^+$ is $C_{n2}H_{m2}F_{(2n2-m2+1)}-SO_2^-$ [[()]] wherein $n1$ and $n2$ are integers not less than 1, and $m1$ and $m2$ are integers not less than 0 [[()]] .

3. (Currently Amended) The flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 1, wherein a cation making a pair with said anion, ~~shown by of~~ said chemical formula $(1)^+$, which constitutes said salt is a cation of any one of alkali metals, group 2A metals, transition metals, and amphoteric metals.

4. (Currently Amended) The flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 3, wherein ~~a metal constituting said cation is~~ comprises lithium.

5. (Original) The flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 1, wherein said anion-containing salt is lithium-bis (trifluoromethanesulfonyl) imide.

6. (Currently Amended) The flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 1, wherein said anion-containing salt ~~shown by of~~ said chemical formula $(1)^+$ is added to said entire polymer component without intermediary of a medium consisting of a low-molecular-weight polyether-containing compound or a low-molecular-weight polar compound whose molecular weight is not more than 10000.

7. (Currently Amended) The flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 1, wherein ~~supposing that a~~ when the volume resistivity of said flame-retardant seamless belt measured at a low temperature of 10°C and a low humidity of 15% is R_{LL} and that a volume resistivity thereof measured at a high temperature of 32.5°C and a high humidity of 90% is R_{HH} , the volume resistivity R_{LL} and the volume resistivity R_{HH} satisfy an equation of $\log_{10}R_{LL} - \log_{10}R_{HH} \leq 2.5$.

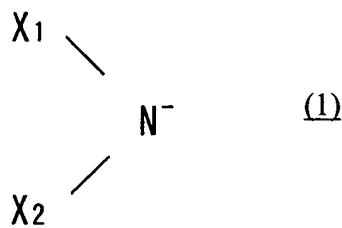
8. (Original) The flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 1, having at least one coating layer on a peripheral surface thereof.

9. (Currently Amended) A method of manufacturing a flame-retardant seamless belt comprising the steps of:

fusing and kneading, ~~by~~ in an extruder [[,]] a conductive master batch containing a polyester thermoplastic elastomer and not less than one wt% ~~nor and not~~ more than 20 wt% of an anion-containing salt, shown below by a chemical formula (1) 4, added to said polyester thermoplastic elastomer; a flame-retardant additive; and a thermoplastic composition containing said polyester thermoplastic elastomer as a main component thereof to form a material for said flame-retardant seamless belt; and

extruding said material from an annular die and molding said material into a shape of a belt by using a sizing die [[.]] .

Chemical Formula 1



wherein X₁ and X₂ each denote a functional group which contains C, -F, and -SO₂- and in which the number of carbon atoms is one to eight.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 9, wherein said flame-retardant additive and said thermoplastic composition containing said polyester thermoplastic elastomer as said main component thereof are kneaded and supplied to said extruder as a flame-retardant master batch; and said mixture of said conductive master batch and said flame-retardant master batch are extruded vertically from said annular die.

11. (Original) An image-forming apparatus having said flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 1.

12. (New) The flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 1, comprising not less than 20 wt% and not more than 35 wt% of melamine cyanurate, serving as a flame-retardant additive.

13. (New) The flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 1, wherein said volume resistivity is not less than $1.0 \times 10^6 \Omega \cdot \text{cm}$ and not more than $1.0 \times 10^{11} \Omega \cdot \text{cm}$.

14. (New) The flame-retardant seamless belt according to claim 1, wherein said polyester thermoplastic elastomer is a copolymer of a hard segment consisting of polyester having an aromatic ring and a low-melting point soft segment consisting of a polyether and/or polyester.